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ABSTRACT

This publication is intended for teachers bringing a class to visit the National Archives in Washington, D.C., for a workshop on primary documents. The National Archives serves as the repository for all federal records of enduring value. Primary sources are vital teaching tools because they actively engage the student's imagination so that he or she may visualize past events and make sense of their reality and meaning. This publication concerns a workshop on the U.S. Civil War. Background information on two documents, The Emancipation Proclamation and an engraving of the Battle between the Monitor and the Merrimac, which are part of the workshop and are included. Photographs of the documents and student exercises also are included. (DB)

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ED 364 449

Brother Against Brother

The Civil War

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Brother Against Brother

FOR THE TEACHER

Thank you for arranging a National Archives workshop for your class. For too many students, history is just an endless string of dates and events chronicled in a textbook. Primary sources actively engage the student's imagination so that he or she may visualize past events and sense their reality and meaning. Before your workshop, it would be advantageous to introduce your students to primary sources with the poster-size documents and the attendant exercises we have provided. The exercises may be photocopied and should be adapted to fit your objectives and teaching style. We hope that these preliminary materials and our workshop will enhance your class's understanding and appreciation of the Civil War.

The Emancipation Proclamation

On January 1, 1863, while signing the Emancipation Proclamation, President Abraham Lincoln stated: "I never, in my life, felt more certain that I was doing right than I do in signing this paper." Upon reading the original document, however, both teacher and student alike will find it rather bland and legalistic, lacking the rhetorical flourish characteristic of so many of Lincoln's pronouncements. Within the context of the early 1860s, the Proclamation was politically pragmatic rather than socially moralistic. But in the much wider scope of history, it heralded the end of slavery and led the way for the 13th amendment to the Constitution, which abolished slavery. Examining and discussing the Emancipation Proclamation with your class will enable your students to understand that the document irrevocably changed the nature of the Civil War from a struggle for political union to a war against slavery.

Although Lincoln announced in his first inaugural address that he had no desire "to interfere with slavery in the States where it exists," by 1862 many Republicans insisted that the war against the rebel slave states must be a war to end the institution of slavery itself. This policy was in accordance with Lincoln's moral view of slavery, but it would alienate roughly half of the Union constituency. Nonetheless, it became obvious in 1862 that if he did not take action against slavery, he would jeopardize the support of his core Republican constituency.

Lincoln had originally intended to a make a preliminary emancipation announcement in the summer of 1862 but was persuaded by Secretary of State William Seward to hold off on the announcement until a major Union military victory could provide it with added potency. By delaying his announcement, Lincoln gave himself time to ready the loyal border slave states for what was to come. This holdup, however, infuriated abolitionists and inspired Horace Greeley's famous editorial, "The Prayer of Twenty Millions." Greeley alleged that the "Union cause has suffered immensely from mistaken deference to Rebel slavery" because Lincoln had been "unduly influenced by the councils, the representations, the menaces, of certain fossil politicians hailing from the border Slave states." On August 22, 1862, in an unprecedented response by a President to an editorial, Lincoln fired back: "My paramount object in this struggle *is* to save the Union, and is *not* either to save or destroy slavery. If I could save the Union without freeing any slaves I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing *all* then I would do it; and if I could do it by freeing some and leaving others alone I would also do that." His response to Greeley served not so much as an admonition to the abolitionist cause but as a warning to the opponents of the Proclamation that they must accept emancipation as an integral part of saving the Union.

September 17, 1862, brought news of a Union victory at Antietam Creek, MD. In the bloodiest battle of the Civil War, Gen. George McClellan's Union forces halted Gen. Robert E. Lee's advancing Army of Northern Virginia and turned them back across the Potomac River. On September 22, with a victory now in hand, Lincoln issued a preliminary proclamation declaring that all slaves in all rebel states would be freed on January 1, 1863. On the day specified, Lincoln officially signed the final Proclamation, which bound the government and the military of the United States to liberate the slaves in the rebel states "as an act of justice, warranted by the Constitution, upon military necessity." The Proclamation did not apply to the border slave states (who refused to accept gradual emancipation) — Maryland, Delaware, Missouri, and Kentucky — nor to those parts of the Confederacy controlled by Union armies because these areas were not in rebellion.

A class reading of the Emancipation Proclamation may be a good starting point from which your students can begin to reflect on the political and military concerns Lincoln sought to manipulate. First, the abolitionists wanted universal emancipation because they saw the Civil War as a moral crusade. Although this view accorded with Lincoln's personal convictions, he could not jeopardize the allegiance of the border slave states. Second, the Emancipation Proclamation was a strategic military instrument designed to deprive the South of a labor supply necessary for wartime industry and agriculture. It also authorized the recruitment of freed slaves as Union soldiers, thereby enabling them to make a vital contribution to the Union victory and to the preservation of their freedom. Last, by diverting world attention to the issue of slavery, the Emancipation Proclamation dashed Confederate hopes for diplomatic recognition from Britain and France, nations where antislavery sentiments prevailed. The war was now being fought to destroy the South's most basic institution. As Lincoln said in his Gettysburg Address on November 19, 1863, it was a war fought for "a new birth of freedom."

The Monitor *and the* Merrimac

The naval engagement between the U.S.S. *Monitor* and the Confederate *Merrimac* during the Battle of Hampton Roads on March 9, 1862, proved to be a turning point in the history of naval warfare. Just as the Emancipation Proclamation signaled the end of slavery, this battle marked the end of the wooden ship navy. According to a London *Times* editorial in March 1862, the impact was felt immediately: "It is quite impossible to dissemble the fact that nine-tenths of the British Navy have been rendered comparatively useless." The modern era of the heavily armored battleship, or "dreadnought," had dawned. The reproduction on the back of your poster, entitled *Battle between the Monitor and Merrimac*, is an engraving of an 1862 drawing by J. O. Davidson. The drawing recalls in stunning detail a Civil War event that had a profound impact on naval history.

When Union forces evacuated the Norfolk Navy Yard, they scuttled the 6-year-old steam frigate *Merrimac* along with seven other ships. Confederate forces raised it from the depths, converted it into an ironclad ram, and renamed it the C.S.S. *Virginia*. It was designed to break the Union blockade of Southern ports. Though formidable, it lacked speed and maneuverabilty. It could achieve a top speed of only 4 knots, and it took half an hour just to turn around! The *Merrimac*'s armor plating made the ship top-heavy and almost unseaworthy, and as a technological innovation, it was not in the same class as the *Monitor*.

The *Monitor* was designed by the Swedish engineer John Ericsson. Construction of the Union ironclad began in October 1861 and was completed on January 30, 1862. In the drawing, the U.S.S. *Monitor* is the smaller ship resembling a submarine. Its great innovation was the revolving turret visible in the lower left corner. The revolving turret was equipped with two 11-inch Dahlgren guns. The *Merrimac* was only equipped with 9-inch stationary Dahlgren guns. The turret and deck were the only parts of the *Monitor* susceptible to enemy attack because the rest of the vessel was submerged.

The inset map on the back of the poster, prepared in 1862 by Col. J. J. Cram of the Union Military Reconnaissance Department of Virginia, shows the placement of these ships during their engagement. The first day of the Battle of Hampton Roads, March 8, 1862, was a Confederate rout in which the *Merrimac* sunk one Union ship, captured a second, and ran a third aground. When the *Merrimac* returned to the Norfolk Navy Yard, it seemed as if nothing stood in the way of the destruction of the Union fleet. Before dawn on March 9, the *Monitor* sailed into Hampton Roads. On the morning of March 9, when the *Merrimac* returned to finish off the ship it had run aground, it was surprised to see a second ship, the *Monitor*, lying in wait. The two ironclads fired on one another for 2 hours without inflicting serious damage. The standoff meant that the Union blockade would not be broken. The Confederacy's dominance of the sea lasted but 1 day.

Historian Bruce Catton summed up the importance of this battle in *This Hallowed Ground:* "The day was March 9, memorable for the most momentous drawn battle in history — a battle nobody won, but that made the navies of the world obsolete." The new technology antiquated traditional naval tactics as well. The revolving gun turret meant that ships no longer had to come broadside against one another in order to fire. Armor plating demonstrated the need for larger guns capable of more potent firepower. The naval planners of the world were compelled to return to their drawing boards and redesign every aspect of their ships.

Explain to your students that the outgrowth of this new era in naval design was the powerful dreadnoughts, or "capital," ships. Just as the nuclear arms race was a hallmark of the cold war world, the naval race to build superior fleets of capital ships was a prominent factor in world politics from the late 1800s until World War II.

What is the National Archives?

Established in 1934, the National Archives helps preserve our nation's history by serving as the repository for all federal records of enduring value. It thus serves the federal government, researchers of many topics, and the American public. Because federal records reflect and document more than 200 years of American development, the records in the National Archives holdings are great in number, diverse in character, and rich in information.

Before your students participate in a tour or a workshop, they should be familiar with the mission of the National Archives. We recommend that you present your students with the following vocabulary words and questions:

- *Please define Archives, Archivist, Document, Record, Preservation.*
- *Why do you and your family save documents? Why are they important?*
- *The U.S. government keeps its records in the National Archives.*
  Why does the government save its records?
- *What kinds of records might the U.S. government want to save?*
- *What famous documents are at the National Archives?*

You will be called by the National Archives docent assigned to your class about a week before the date of your tour or workshop. If the workshop will be held in your classroom, then please be prepared to relay information concerning directions, parking, and school check-in procedures.

Whether it is our Behind-the-Scenes Tour or one of our Primary Document Workshops, we are confident that the experience will provide an exciting new look at history. In order to assess our performance, we would appreciate your cooperation in completing the enclosed evaluation form and returning it in the self-addressed stamped envelope provided.

If you have any additional questions regarding your tour or workshop, please contact the Volunteer and Tour Office Staff at 202-501-5205.

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Exercise I:

The Emancipation Proclamation

Read the transcription of the Emancipation Proclamation. After each paragraph, write notes summarizing the essential points.

1. When was the Emancipation Proclamation issued? When was the seal of the United States affixed? _____

2. To whom does it apply? _____

3. What two Confederate states have territory exempted by the Proclamation? _____

_____

4. Who will be received into the U.S. armed services? _____

5. What were Lincoln's major reasons for issuing the Emancipation Proclamation? _____

_____

_____

_____

6. What conditions did he put on emancipation? _____ _____ _____

_____

_____

7. Why did Lincoln delay issuing the Proclamation? _____

_____

_____

8. Why do you think people gave Lincoln the sobriquet "the Great Emancipator"?

_____

_____

_____

Exercise II:

Engraving of the *Battle between the Monitor and Merrimac*
by J. O. Davidson

Study the engraving and the inset map carefully in order to form a historical understanding of the events of the Battle of Hampton Roads.

1. When did the *Monitor* and the *Merrimac* fight? _____

2. Hampton Roads is in what state and at the confluence of what four rivers? You will need another map to answer the question completely. _____

_____

_____

3. What three ships are located closest to the battle between the ironclads? _____

_____

4. Identify and describe the Union ironclad. _____

_____

_____

5. Identify and describe the Confederate ironclad. _____

_____

_____

6. Which ironclad has a better overall design? Why? _____

_____

_____

7. Which ironclad seems to be winning? What was the final outcome? _____

_____

8. Why was this battle between just two ships so important? _____

_____

_____

The EMANCIPATION *PROCLAMATION*

January 1, 1863

A Transcription

By the President of the United States of America:

A Proclamation.

Whereas, on the twenty-second day of September, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-two, a proclamation was issued by the President of the United States, containing, among other things, the following, to wit:

"That on the first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, all persons held as slaves within any State or designated part of a State, the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States, shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free; and the Executive Government of the United States, including the military and naval authority thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of such persons, and will do no act or acts to repress such persons, or any of them, in any efforts they may make for their actual freedom.

"That the Executive will, on the first day of January aforesaid, by proclamation, designate the States and parts of States, if any, in which the people thereof, respectively, shall then be in rebellion against the United States, and the fact that any State, or the people thereof, shall on that day be in good faith represented in the Congress of the United States by members chosen thereto at elections wherein a majority of the qualified voters of such State shall have participated, shall, in the absence of strong countervailing testimony, be deemed conclusive evidence that such State, and the people thereof, are not then in rebellion against the United States."

Now, therefore, I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, by virtue of the power in me vested as Commander-in-Chief, of the Army and Navy of the United States in time of actual armed rebellion against the authority and government of the United States, and as a fit and necessary war measure for suppressing said rebellion, do, on this first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, and in accordance with my purpose so to do publicly proclaimed for the full period of one hundred days, from the day first above mentioned, order and designate as the States and parts of States wherein the people thereof respectively, are this day in rebellion against the United States, the following, to wit:

Arkansas, Texas, Louisiana, (except the Parishes of St. Bernard, Plaquemines, Jefferson, St. John, St. Charles, St. James Ascension, Assumption, Terrebonne, Lafourche, St. Mary, St. Martin, and Orleans, including the City of New Orleans) Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, and Virginia, (except the forty-eight counties designated as West Virginia, and also the counties of Berkley, Accomac, Northampton, Elizabeth City, York, Princess Ann, and Norfolk, including the cities of Norfolk and Portsmouth[1]), and which excepted parts, are for the present left precisely as if this proclamation were not issued.

And by virtue of the power, and for the purpose aforesaid, I do order and declare that all persons held as slaves within said designated States, and parts of States, are, and henceforward shall be free, and that the Executive government of the United States, including the military and naval authorities thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of said persons.

And I hereby enjoin upon the people so declared to be free to abstain from all violence, unless in necessary self-defence; and I recommend to them that, in all cases when allowed, they labor faithfully for reasonable wages.

And I further declare and make known, that such persons of suitable condition, will be received into the armed service of the United States to garrison forts, positions, stations, and other places, and to man vessels of all sorts in said service.

And upon this act, sincerely believed to be an act of justice, warranted by the Constitution, upon military necessity, I invoke the considerate judgment of mankind, and the gracious favor of Almighty God.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

Done at the City of Washington, this first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the eighty-seventh.

By the President: ABRAHAM LINCOLN

WILLIAM H. SEWARD, Secretary of State

The Emancipation Proclamation
The National Archives

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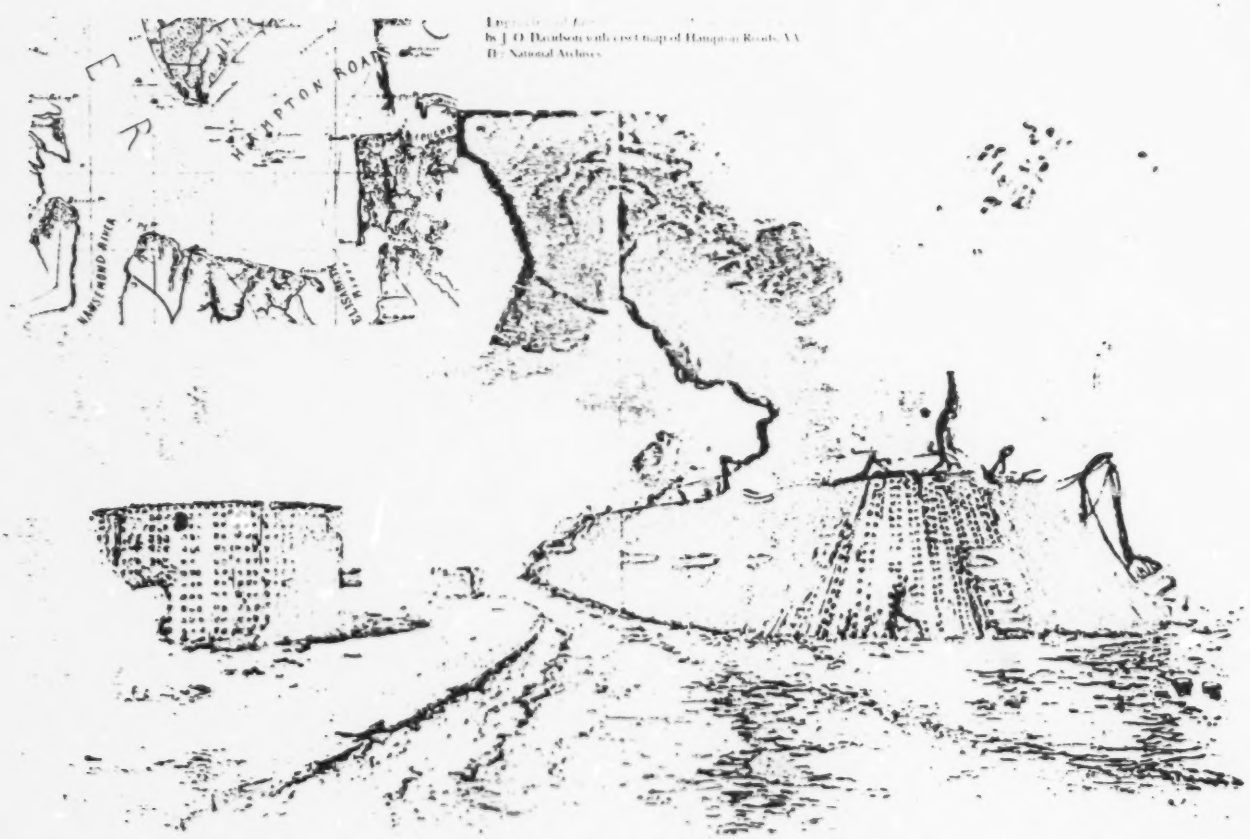

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